



the parkword



THE PARKWOOD HILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2018

Fifty Years of Neighborhood Swimming

by Donna Rifken

It was June 2, 1968, a clear and warm start to the summer. Lester Six and the Parkcrest board members stood in front of a giant yellow ribbon, hung across the pool gate. Dads in button-front, short sleeve shirts stood with moms dressed in pedal pushers and 'June Cleaver' shirtdresses. The children danced around in their bathing suits ready for their first dip in the new, shimmering Parkcrest pool. These children knew the pool was special; it was only the fourth neighborhood pool in the City of Madison.

The history of Parkcrest Pool parallels the history of our neighborhood. It began with Gerry Dohm of Dohm Construction, the developer who bought much of the land to build homes for the rapidly growing Parkwood Hills neighborhood. Dohm Construction set aside almost a city block's worth of land at the center of the neighborhood for recreational purposes. The earliest residents decided that a pool and tennis club would best engage all the children and families moving in. Throughout 1966 and 1967, residents drew up plans and budgets and secured city permits to build the pool.

When the pool opened in 1968, a share cost \$515, and the annual dues were \$95. Pool shares sold out pretty quickly, and by the early 1990's, the only way to get a share was to buy a house with an existing share. Because of the waiting list for shares, some families joined Shorewood and many others joined the effort to build the High Point Pool in order to swim.

The Parkcrest pool complex was built for \$196,350 in 1968 and looked pretty much like it does today except for a high diving board that was removed later. The lap pool was improved in the late 1990's in order to provide a deeper end for competitive swimmers. Fast forward 50 years and not much has changed except for the names and faces of families. Our neighborhood has taken good care of the pool



and continued to make it a safe place for families to swim and play together. Neighbors still volunteer on the board, taking time from their busy lives to ensure that we have a well-staffed and clean pool. In 2011, when Parkcrest hosted the All-City Swim meet, 49 years after the first All-City Swim meet, even non-swimming neighbors came out to help roast hot dogs and empty trash cans.

Of course, Parkcrest appreciates their long-time members, but they also love to see new families at the pool. Thus, in honor of Parkcrest's 50th anniversary, the Parkcrest Swim and Tennis Club board offered a special membership rate last summer and this summer. Excitingly, over ninety new memberships have been purchased during the two-year membership drive.

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Parkcrest's Anniversary Events

To celebrate and commemorate Parkcrest's 50th anniversary, many events were planned. Here are just two of them.



Race participants celebrate with popsicles at the finish line.

Parkcrest Penguin Waddle 5K Run/Walk

Fifty-eight participants came out on Memorial Day to complete a 5K run/walk. Because of the heat, the race route was changed to the Muir Mile route, so competitors could choose their distance. Runners/walkers completed one mile, two miles, three miles, or one runner (Jake Zarov) decided to complete four miles! An aid station served the thirsty participants, and they received popsicles and water at the finish line. In addition, Parkcrest pool opened one hour early to allow runners/walkers a refreshing dip in the pool. Fun was had by all.

Thank you to all the participants and to the race organizers Ryan Richards, Teresa Schutz, and Jason and Paige Verhelst.

Parkcrest Water Polo Tournament

On Sunday, June 24, Parkcrest pool hosted an inaugural water polo tournament. From 8 am-noon, six teams (8-12 players each with members 15 aged and older) each played three games. Teams came from other area pools, including Westside and Seminole. Three teams represented Parkcrest: a current swimmer team, an alumni team, and a PC coaches team. The PC swimmers took second in the tournament. It was enjoyable to watch, exhausting to play, and both participants and spectators learned quite a bit about the rules of water polo. After the tournament, participants met at a local establishment for refreshments, food, and game analysis.

Look for both events next summer too!



Water polo provides the contestants with a challenging work-out.

Halloween Bonfire

Although it's still the middle of summer, mark your calendars now for the Halloween Bonfire!

Friday, October 26,
6:30-8:30 pm
Everglade Park

Lyn Swol is in need of volunteers. To pitch in at this popular event, please contact her at vanswol@wisc.edu



New Staff at Parkcrest By Paige Verhelst

Nothing is more refreshing on a hot summer day than a dip in the pool. We are lucky to have a facility in our neighborhood that offers swim and dive team, open family swim, basketball, social events, and lessons for swimming, diving, water ballet, fitness, and tennis.

The day starts with Early Bird Swim at 6 am, and the pool is a hub of activity for all ages throughout the day.

This summer, the two who are leading the pool are General Manager Holly Anderson and Facilities Manager Grant Disch.

Holly's family moved to the neighborhood in 1996, when she was a baby, and they joined the the pool the next summer. After starting as a snack shack employee six years ago, Holly has taught swimming and water aerobics, been a lifeguard, and been head lifeguard. Now in the role of General Manager, she hopes to introduce some changes. Since this spring, Holly has instituted a "Lifeguard of the week" program, brought new exciting food to the snack shack, moved the cash register to a more convenient spot for members and workers, held staff cleaning in-services, and she has weekly activities in the works to bring more involvement to the pool. Check email, Facebook, or pool signs for upcoming event information.

Holly says she enjoys meeting and talking with all the wonderful PC members and families; however, her favorite part of the day is at night after the pool is closed, and the water sparkles on a clear night. She loves the calm before the activity of the next day.

In the fall, Holly returns to UW Whitewater to complete her final year of undergrad with an English education major. She hopes to teach higher education someday after getting her masters and Ph.D.



Grant Disch's family have been members of Parkcrest since before he was born. He began PC swim team at the tender age of five. His favorite swimming memory was in 2011 when Parkcrest hosted All City. Grant enjoyed hanging out in Tent City and watching the big meet bring the neighborhood together.

Besides working as a lunch bunch babysitter and mowing the PC lawn, this is Grant's first official post for Parkcrest. Beginning in middle school as a side job, his lawn mowing business led him to where he is today. A number of summers ago, a neighbor client offered him a job working facilities at a few downtown apartments.

Fast forward five years- Grant is excited to be back in the neighborhood and working at PC. His job duties include making sure the water is safe (chemical-wise) and at the right temperature, the filtration system is running smoothly, and the pump room is working properly. He also keeps the pool deck and lawn safe, clean, and suitable.

In the fall, Grant returns to UW Platteville for his third year of undergrad. He hopes his double-major in geography and political science will lead to more schooling or some sort of teaching.



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Spring Fling

The Spring Fling remains one of the Parkwood Hill Community Association's favorite annual activities, giving residents a chance to visit and to welcome some of our newest neighbors. Thanks go to Peter Olson for organizing! The 2018 event was held April 28 at the Vintage Brewing Company. Thank you, again, to Vintage for our space!



Owen Park Updates:

Garlic mustard, pond exploration day, and new project!

by Donna Rifken

Paul Quinlan, the City of Madison Parks Conservation manager, updated me on the work planned for Owen Park this year. Hand-picking and herbicide spraying has begun again in the woodland area along Ozark Road, with the goal of eradicating invasive garlic mustard, burdock, Asian bittersweet, and Himalayan pokeweed. The efforts from last year seem to be paying off as I saw very little garlic mustard along the Ozark path into the park this spring.

You can help with this goal as you walk through the woodlands. Since it is late in the blooming cycle, just pluck the seed/flower heads from the plant, pull the plant out by the roots, and leave it to dry out along the path. Take the seed/flower heads home, put in a baggie and throw into the trash. In the early spring, Paul advised pulling and bagging the entire plant, since young garlic mustard can disperse seeds even as it dries.

Paul organized the first Pond Exploration Day for Muir students and volunteers. Youngsters used coffee-can dippers and nets to sample the animals and invertebrates living in the three retention ponds at the south end of Owen Park. The students found mosquito and dragonfly larvae, frogs, tadpoles and unfortunately, a few goldfish. Just a reminder, goldfish do not belong in the retention ponds. Paul explained that goldfish disturb the sediment at the bottom of the ponds and reduce aquatic plant health, which impacts all the other creatures who rely on the plants for habitat and water clarity.

Paul and I spoke at length about how to measure and understand the impacts of foraging animals, like turkey and deer, on native plant communities. We tossed around



the idea of an informal partnership between Owen Park neighbors and the Parks Department to create a small enclosure around a part of the prairie and measure plant growth/destruction compared to a similar unfenced area.

Paul thought the city would contribute the construction materials if neighbors could come together and help with the installation. We would then inventory and measure plant species that grow in the undisturbed/fenced area and compare it to similar data from the open/unfenced area. Such an experiment would offer us a visual measure of how an undisturbed prairie grows and might serve as a baseline for future plant/animal management.

Neighbors who want to help and are willing to get their hands dirty should email me: drifken@gmail.com.

I will arrange a first meet and greet in early July to form a Friends of Owen Park group specifically focused on this project.

Now it's time to get out and enjoy the park! See you there.

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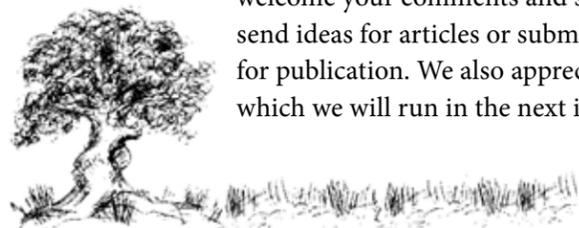
This newsletter is published four times per year and serves as an important and integral communication tool for our neighborhood and community. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please send ideas for articles or submit your own articles for publication. We also appreciate any corrections which we will run in the next issue.

Next deadline: September 15, 2018

Approximate delivery: Early October, 2018

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Book Review: *Piecing Me Together*

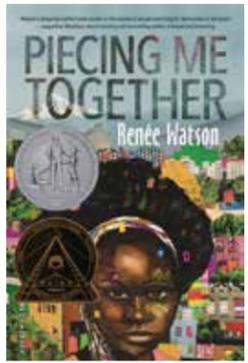
By Sara and Jessie Young

Piecing Me Together by Reneé Watson is about a girl striving for success while facing challenges. Growing up in a poor neighborhood in Portland, Oregon, Jade, a junior at a private high school, enjoys art. She is one of the only black students at her school and often feels misunderstood. Jade is a driven girl challenged by racism, poverty, and other hardships. When her school offers her a chance to be a part of Woman to Woman, a mentorship program for “at risk” girls that allows her to get a scholarship to college, Jade reluctantly joins. She expresses herself through art, mostly collaging. In particular, Jade uses art to communicate her feelings about police violence towards unarmed black people.

The novel intertwines Jade’s relationships between her mom, her mentor, and her friends with humor and warmth. *Piecing Me Together* has a strong character and gives the reader a window into a world in which we are not as familiar. For example, at times Jade comes home to an empty

refrigerator, so she sneaks food from mentor banquets to take home. This made us realize how fortunate we are. We recommend *Piecing Me Together* because it is a compelling and thoughtful story. *Piecing Me Together* is a well written book that celebrates diversity.

We are now reading *This Side of Home*, also by Reneé Watson, which we are enjoying.



Sara and Jessie Young live in Parkwood Hills. Sara is going to be a sophomore at James Madison Memorial and runs cross country and track. Jessie is a physician at UW Health and enjoys running, baking, and spending time with family.

Featured Figure: This quarter, we feature CRISTEL GJERDE...

Years in Neighborhood: 20 years

Family

- Craig (husband) is retired. He taught math at St Paul Central High School in St Paul, MN. He was a Professor in Medical Education at University of Iowa prior to coming to the University of Wisconsin.
- Two adult daughters, Kari in Iowa, and Erika in Minnesota. Each is married with two children.

Why did you choose Parkwood Hills?

We choose to live in Parkwood Hills because it was a neighborhood with churches, schools, parks, sidewalks, playgrounds and close enough to cafes and shopping.

How has the neighborhood changed in twenty years?

Most of the first-time owners have moved out, and younger families have moved in. Plus, the homes have been upgraded.

Best part about living in Parkwood Hills:

The neighborhood is friendly but not nosy. It's nice to see people watching out for each other.

What was your job?

In Iowa, I was lucky to stay home while my children grew up. Then, I was a kindergarten teacher for six years. When we moved to Madison, I got a job teaching kindergarten at EAGLE School. I was there for nine years before I retired.

What is the best advice you received, or what is the best advice you would give young parents?

Former Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz once said that neighborhoods need to be more connected. People should be neighborly. If we are connected to others, kids learn how to behave. After all, they are less likely to smash a pumpkin if they know their neighbors.

What do you do in your free time?

Besides visiting grandchildren, Cristel says she sews, reads a lot, and takes a stretch and strengthen class a few days each week. The class is a warm water fitness class that she has done with Craig for the past seven years. In addition, each year, she and Craig travel to Europe to attend the “Largest Classical Music Festival in the world” (according to Craig).



CLASSIFIED ADS

Personal classified ads are accepted for this newsletter, which is mailed to 500 households in Parkwood Hills. Ads may be edited for length. Ads from Parkwood Hills residents are free (up to 6 per year per address). Commercial ads (up to 4 lines) or ads from outside the neighborhood are \$10 each. Business card size ads are \$35 each. Email your ad to editor@parkwoodhills.org or mail your payment, name, address and phone number with your ad to Elizabeth Morrison, 6913 Colony Dr. Madison WI 53717. Please make your check payable to Parkwood Hills Community Association.

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